

Finally, although duty in a maneuver unit is probably the most important assignment in the Signal Corps from a wartime point of view, many signal officers do their best to avoid this duty. Some have developed an attachment to fluorescent lighting and coffee pots. Others have heard horror stories about signal officers in maneuver units who were fired or rated poorly for things

that were beyond their control.

Leaders within the Signal Corps have part of the responsibility for dispelling such misconceptions. But only you, the signal officer's leader, can give him a clear set of goals and, in turn, acknowledge his contributions to the unit. If you will start with the signal officer you have now, give him a clear mission statement, and recognize his achieve-

ments, then many other capable signal officers will follow, and your continued success will be assured.

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SWAP SHOP



MARKSMANSHIP WITH CHEMICAL PROTECTIVE MASKS

Traditional marksmanship techniques do not work when a rifleman is wearing the M-17 protective mask. The filter in the cheekpiece of the mask prevents him from getting close enough to the stock to see through the sights. It is possible, however, to use the mask as a support and to "instinct shoot" with acceptable combat accuracy:

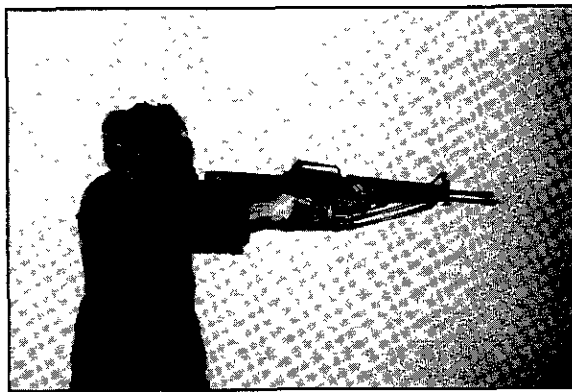
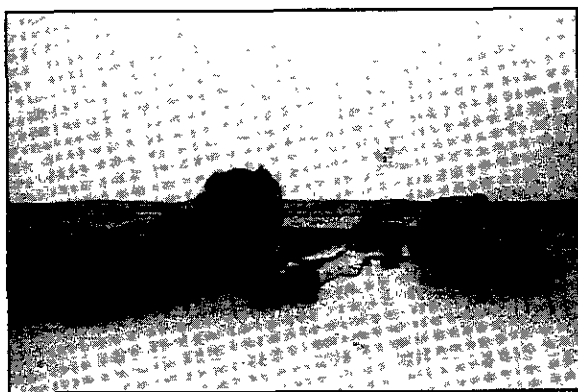
In the prone position, the firer allows the barrel of the rifle to rest on a support and presses the butt of the stock firmly against the mask's voicemitter. The lower part of the butt rests in a pocket formed by the thumb and forefinger of his left hand. The left hand, in turn, may have to be supported in the crook of the right arm. (Because the left hand cannot grasp the forward hand grips, the use of any available support for the rifle barrel gives the best results.) This three-point stability allows the rifleman to put out steady, accurate fire. (Left-handed shooters, of course, reverse the instructions.)

When masked, the firer uses the sitting position rather than the kneeling position. He sits as if doing sit-ups, then crosses his ankles and places his upper arms just forward of his knees. His left hand is placed under the magazine and the rifle butt pressed firmly against the voicemitter.

For both the sitting and the prone positions, the rifleman sets the rifle buttstock firmly against the nose of his mask, which permits him to aim through the sights. Shooters who have difficulty using the sights may aim by looking directly over them. With practice, both methods yield acceptable accuracy. Recoil from the M16 is scarcely felt in this position.

When standing, a masked marksman replaces the voicemitter support technique with instinct shooting. This technique resembles a combat pistol stance, and it requires a quick snap-shot before muscle strain decreases accuracy. The rifleman holds the weapon normally by the pistol grip and foregrip, takes a step toward the target, raising the weapon as he does so until both arms are fully extended. He does not press the stock against his mask. As in combat pistol shooting, the marksman fires a shot as soon as the sights come level with his eyes. Because this stance is the least stable, it requires the most practice.

Using these techniques, a masked rifleman will be able to meet any aggressor on a chemical battlefield with steady, accurate, deadly fire.



(Submitted by Kevin L. Jamison, a former Special Forces officer, Kansas City, Missouri.)